

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Board meetings



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

Board Meeting 23 February 2022

This meeting was conducted remotely using the Zoom application and was hosted in the Provost's Office.

Present: Provost (Dr L Doyle), Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Professor O Sheils), Registrar (Professor N Cox), Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation (Professor E Denny), Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies (Professor D Shepherd), Professor K Ahmad, Professor S Alyn Stacey, Professor L Brennan, Mr K Byrne, Ms J Donoghue, Professor D Faas, Ms B Genockey, Mr D Grouse, Ms L Keogh, Professor R A Kenny, Ms R Mathews-McKay, Professor R McManus, Professor K McTiernan, Ms S Mueller-Owens, Professor A Nolan, Professor L Roe, Ms G Scanlon, Professor F Sheerin, Professor J Walsh.

Apologies: Professor A Burke, Professor D R Phelan, Professor A Seery, Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer (Mr P Reynolds), Vice-President for Global Engagement (Professor E Stokes).

In attendance: Assistant Secretary to the College (Ms V Butler).

(ex officio) Secretary to the College (Mr J Coman),

(by invitation) Interim Chief Operating Officer (Ms O Cunningham).

SECTION A

BD/21-22/165 Statements of Interest

The Secretary to the College advised that no statements of potential conflicts of interest had been received.

BD/21-22/166 Minutes of the Meetings of 19 January 2022 and 26 January 2022

The Board approved the draft minutes of the meetings of 19 January 2022 and 26 January 2022.

BD/21-22/167 Matters Arising

The following items were raised under matters arising:

(i) BD/21-22/137 (iii) Focus on the Printing House Square Project

The Secretary to the College advised that a date for the visit to the new location for the rifle range has been proposed as 7 April 2022 at 3.00pm and that his office will be liaising with Board members to make the necessary arrangements.

(ii) BD/21-22/143 Provost's Report

The Secretary to the College advised the Board that an email will be issued to all Board members later in the day and asked that Board members respond to advise whether they are comfortable to meet in person for the March Board meeting and with the arrangements proposed.

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Board meetings

Ms Genockey joined the meeting at this point.

BD/21-22/168 Strategic Discussion of Major Strategy and Risk Categories: Research

Dean of Research, Professor Wolfgang Schmitt and Chief Risk Officer, Ms Julia Carmichael joined the meeting for this item.

The Provost introduced this item noting that the Board Review Working Group had noted a desire for the Board to focus more on strategy and risk and to look at areas across the College from a risk perspective.

Professor Schmitt with reference to his presentation dated 23 February 2022, which had been circulated, provided the Board with an overview of the main strategic goals and risks related to Research. He outlined the team in the Research Office, the roles of the Associate Deans of Research and advised the Board that they are following the Living Research Excellence Strategy which echoes the goals of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

Professor Schmitt summarised the high-level objectives for research and summarised the strategic activities supported by the Research Office. He also outlined the specific goals and risks for Research in respect of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

Professor Schmitt concluded his presentation by presenting an overview of the main risks to research categorised under the headings of Financial, Reputational and Strategic and then summarised the main conclusions to be drawn from his presentation.

The Provost thanked the Dean of Research and opened the item for comment.

A Board member welcomed the focus on post-award support for researchers noting how this can impact on a researcher's ability to apply for funding. She also noted the risks associated with GDPR for Research and the importance of progressing with the Athena SWAN agenda.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted the interconnectivity of many risks and advised that perhaps there are other ways of considering risks particularly in respect of ownership and responsibility.

In response to comments from Board members, Professor Schmitt acknowledged the importance of providing supports and for academics, of having career development pathways and a good infrastructure to support academics in assisting the University to achieve its strategic goals. He also acknowledged the risks for Research from a GDPR perspective and advised that while funding has been made available for the Deputy Data Protection Officer (Research) role, further investment in this area would be needed to address this key issue.

The Provost noting the importance of updating the Board in respect of Athena SWAN, suggested that a short document be prepared for the Board to outline what it will require to achieve a silver award and how best the University can do this. She noted the role of the Associate Vice-Provost for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in this and the action plans being developed by the EDI unit.

A Board member noted the risks associated with the increasing cost of living in Ireland and of Brexit which could lead to an increase in the teaching load of newer staff and suggested that new academic staff be given some time when they join to develop their research.

A Board member, referencing the publication of a report on education in the United

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Board meetings

Kingdom, noted the importance of ensuring adequate supports for academic staff and also noted the importance of the strategic plans for schools reflecting academic needs.

Professor Cox joined the meeting at this point.

In response to queries from a Board member Professor Schmitt clarified the role of the Early-Career Academy which will foster and attract academic talent and provide fairer career development structures at Trinity while also liaising closely with the Research Development Office. He also noted the high calibre of staff at Trinity and the importance of developing and retaining such colleagues.

Ms Carmichael responding to the comments from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, welcomed the suggestion to further explore ownership of risks and noted the importance of everyone contributing to the upcoming Athena SWAN application.

Following comments from Board members, the need for further consideration of the following matters was acknowledged:

- The retention of staff
- The urgency of required action in respect of Athena SWAN
- Support for early academics and researchers
- The issue of promotion for professional staff.

The Provost thanked Professor Schmitt and Ms Carmichael and they left the meeting at this point.

The Provost noted the potential for repetition in discussion when considering risks for different areas as many have interdependencies or overlap and welcomed suggestions from the Board in relation to how best to consider such matters at future meetings of the Board.

Following comments from Board members it was noted that it would be useful to focus on the top risks with a view to proposing ways of addressing the issues and supporting the Officers and areas concerned.

Following comments from a Board member, the Provost noted the difference between high-level risks that the Board need to monitor versus those risks distributed at a lower level across the College.

Following additional comments from Board members, the Provost noted that further consideration is to be given to how the Board considers risk so that the risk owners can use the expertise of the Board to help them progress the relevant matter and she invited Board members to send her their suggestions, should they wish to do so, after the meeting.

Action/Decision

168.01 The Board noted and discussed the presentation from the Dean of Research and memorandum from the Chief Risk Officer dated 15 February 2022.

BD/21-22/169

Strategic Capital Project Updates

(i) Dashboard

The Board noted the Dashboard as circulated.

(ii) Focus on the E3 Learning Foundry Project

Project Sponsor, Gerard McHugh; Programme Manager, Edwina Hegarty; Head of Capital

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Board meetings

Projects and Planning, Greg Power; Independent Monitor, Leo Harmon and Chair of Steering Committee, Mike Peirce joined the meeting for this sub-item.

The Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation introduced Professor McHugh who had taken on the role of Project Sponsor. She advised the Board that the E3 Project Board had its first meeting on 9 February 2022 to agree the terms of reference noting that herself, the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer, and the Director of Campus Infrastructure are the Trinity members of the Project Board. She advised the Board that the purpose of the Project Board is to review any disputed Employer Representative determinations with an intent to negotiate a resolution. It was noted that the next meeting of the Project Board is scheduled for 6 April 2022.

Professor McHugh, with reference to a presentation dated 23 February 2022, which had been circulated, provided the Board with an overview of the project programme of work to date. He noted that the project had required some enabling and ramp-up projects all of which have enhanced the College infrastructure.

Professor McHugh advised that the commencement of the construction of the Learning Foundry itself had experienced some delays primarily due to the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic and that while some activities were behind programme the contractor had re-sequenced these activities so that the substantial completion date remains unchanged. Professor McHugh advised that there is to be a meeting with the contractor to examine the proposed rescheduling with a view to minimising any potential slippage.

Professor McHugh advised the Board that inflation levels in construction are increasing which may result in impacts on the project budget. He advised the Board that a number of early claims have already been submitted by the contractor and are currently being reviewed.

Professor McHugh concluded by noting that while there are some initial risks and concerns, there is a good team in place to deliver the project on time.

Mr Harmon referencing his report dated 10 February 2022, which had been circulated, provided the Board with an update on the following items:

- Team
- Budget
- Quality
- Programme.

He advised the Board that while the team and the Project Manager are doing an excellent job, some delays to the programme have been observed and that while the project was priced with an expectation of inflation the budget would need to be carefully monitored.

Mr Peirce provided the Board with an update on the work of the E3 Capital Steering Committee and praised the efficient programme management of the project.

The Provost thanked Professor McHugh, Mr Harmon and Mr Pierce and opened the item for discussion.

A Board member voiced his concern regarding the delays being experienced at this early stage of the project and encouraged all involved to try to resolve the matter so that the project can be delivered within the original timeframe.

A Board member raised a query in relation to the Dashboard and the interest paid to date in respect of associated borrowings and it was agreed that as the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer had sent apologies to the meeting, this query would be followed up on after the meeting.

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Board meetings

In response to a further query from the Board member in respect of the E3 Learning Foundry project, the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation clarified the dispute resolution process.

Mr Harmon noted that in his opinion there was excellent governance in place for the project and, in particular, praised the work of the project team. He also noted the importance of ensuring authority lies where it should to help the team to progress their work and to address any issues being experienced with the contractor.

Action/Decision

169.01 The Board noted and discussed the update from the Project Sponsor.

169.02 The Board noted and discussed the memorandum from the Independent Monitor dated 10 February 2022.

Professor McHugh, Ms Hegarty, Mr Harmon, Mr Peirce and Mr Power left the meeting at this point.

BD/21-22/170

Planning Group Report to Board #25

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, with reference to her memorandum dated 16 February 2022 and presentation dated 23 February 2022, provided the Board with an outline of the work of the Planning Group over the period June 2021 to February 2022.

She advised the Board that a lot of the work of the Planning Group had been focused on the review of the Baseline Budgeting Model (BMM) which had started in 2019, was paused during the Pandemic and reignited in September 2021. This included issuing a questionnaire to the Heads of School and meetings with the Heads of School and the School Administrative Managers. It is envisaged that a new model will be agreed by consensus and implemented at the start of the next academic year. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer also advised that the 5% reduction to budgets is to be reversed and noted that the FY22 budget had been presented to the Board in December 2021.

In addition, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised the Board that during the period the Planning Group also monitored Employment Control Framework (ECF) staffing levels and the work of the Recruitment Sub-Group and the Emergency Financial Management Group, both of which were now disbanded.

She concluded her presentation and opened the item for questions.

In response to a query from a Board member in relation to the categories of staff recoded under the ECF, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer agreed to gather the relevant information and to liaise directly with the Board member on the matter.

Responding to comments from a Board member in relation to the importance of the BBM review and of ensuring as much input as possible from across the College, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that there are on-going discussions being had with all areas of College and that members of staff who haven't had an opportunity to engage in the process can contact her directly.

In response to a query from a Board member, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that the final model is yet to be decided and may be a completely new budgeting model or a significantly revised version of the BBM which would allow greater flexibility.

In response to a query from a Board member in relation to the categorisation of technical staff members, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer clarified that such members of staff are included in the professional category and she noted that School strategic staffing plans will give clarity on the supports needed across the Schools.

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Board meetings

Action/Decision

170.01 The Board considered and approved the memorandum from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer dated 16 February 2022 and the accompanying Planning Group Report #25.

BD/21-22/171 2010 Consolidated Statutes: Overview of Potential Changes arising from Higher Education Authority Bill, 2022

The Provost introduced the item noting that it is intended that this item will provide Board members with an overview of the envisaged amendments to the Statutes that would be needed should the HEA Bill 2022 be enacted.

The Registrar, with reference to his memorandum dated 16 February 2022 which had been circulated in advance, provided the Board with a summary of the envisaged requirements and outlined the associated approval processes. He also noted that any proposed amendments would be brought to the Board for approval as appropriate.

The Provost responding to comments from a Board member in respect of student representation on the Board, noted that the Board will have the ability to decide as to the request for the two student members on the Board going forward to be the elected student union Presidents. She advised the Board that she will continue to liaise with the Secretary to the College and with the Registrar to provide reassurance in this regard.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted that the Irish Universities Association (IUA) was continuing to raise concerns regarding the potential additional powers being invested in the HEA and the CEO of the HEA under the Bill.

Responding to comments from a Board member, the Registrar advised that it is proposed to present the overview of the envisaged amendments to the Statutes to the Fellows at their meeting which was scheduled for the following day.

The Registrar, responding to a query from a Board member in respect of the enactment of the Bill, advised that the Bill can be enacted independently of the views of the University. He noted that if enacted it will be for the University to determine whether to approve the required changes to the Statutes to bring our internal governance in line with the legislation.

Responding to a query from a Board member in respect of the timeline for compliance, the Registrar advised that there will be a 12-month period for the necessary steps to be taken to ensure compliance with the legislation.

The Registrar, in response to comments from a Board member in relation to the process for appointment of additional external Board members, advised that it would be prudent to specify any such provisions in a Schedule of the Statutes so that flexibility could be maintained.

The Secretary to the College, referencing the Board Review Working Group Report which contains an agreed competency framework, advised the Board that under the Bill the method by which the University appoints external Board members will need to be approved by the Minister.

The Provost noted that, should the Bill be enacted, there may be a need for a dedicated meeting of the Board to agree how best to proceed.

The Registrar closed the item noting that it would be for the Board and Fellows to decide the process by which any Statute changes would be considered for approval. As was noted in his presentation, there are a significant number of such changes and thus it might be more efficient

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Board meetings

to bring any proposed amendments to the Statutes as a package to the Board for consideration and approval rather than on an individual basis. The Registrar stressed, however, that this would be something on which he would need instruction from both the Board and the Fellows.

Action/Decision

171.01 The Board considered and approved the memorandum from the Registrar dated 16 February 2022.

BD/21-22/172 Provost's Report

The Provost raised the following items:

- **Seanad Bye-Election 2022**

The Provost advised the Board that the Seanad Bye-Election was underway and that there were 17 validly nominated candidates contesting the election. She encouraged Board members to engage with the process where possible and noted the importance of the University seats.

- **Brendan Kennelly Memorial**

The Provost extended her thanks to all who assisted with the memorial service for the late Brendan Kennelly held on 3 February 2022.

- **Trinity Research and Innovation Awards**

The Provost advised that she had attended the Trinity Research and Innovation Awards on Tuesday 22 February 2022 where she had been hugely impressed by the amount and variety of innovation occurring across the College.

- **Green Week**

It was noted that Green Week was in progress having been officially launched on Monday 21 February 2022.

BD/21-22/173 University Council

The Board noted and approved the draft Acta of the Council meeting of 9 February 2022.

BD/21-22/174 Any Other Urgent Business

There were no other items of urgent business.

SECTION B

BD/21-22/175 Board Business

- (i) The Board noted the callover updated to 26 January 2022.
- (ii) The Board noted the outcomes from the meetings of 26 January 2022.

BD/21-22/176 Equality Committee

The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of the meeting of 2 February 2022.

It was noted that the Gender Identity Policy was under review.

BD/21-22/177 Finance Committee

The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of the meetings of 18 November 2021 and 3 February 2022.

BD/21-22/178 Library and Information Committee

The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of the meeting of 22 November 2021.

BD/21-22/179 Remuneration Committee

The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of the meeting of 10 February 2022 and the accompanying memorandum from the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences dated 10 February 2022, which was tabled.

The Provost responding to a query from a Board member, noted that the use of the Departures Framework is tightly controlled and monitored and agreed to provide the Board member with the details in respect of the numbers of such appointments.

SECTION C

BD/21-22/180 Financial Services Division Annual Report 2020/21

The Board noted and approved the report.

BD/21-22/181 Prizes and Other Awards

(i) Gold Medals

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies dated 15 February 2022.

(ii) Entrance Exhibitions

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies dated 4 February 2022.

(iii) Establishment of John O'Hagan Prize in Economics

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Head of School of Social Sciences and Philosophy dated 4 February 2022.

(iv) Establishment of Helga Robinson-Hammerstein Dissertation Prize

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Head of Discipline of History dated 25 January 2022

BD/21-22/182 Higher Degrees

The Board noted Higher Degrees, approved by Council on 9 February 2022.

BD/21-22/183 Absorption of Trinity Centre for Gender Equality and Leadership into Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer dated 9 February 2022.

BD/21-22/184 Correction to Honorary Degree Title

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Registrar dated 14 February 2022.

BD/21-22/185 Related Entity Financial Reporting

The Board noted the memorandum from the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer dated 15 February 2022.

BD/21-22/186 Senate Business – Recommendations for award of the degree MA (jure officii)

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Registrar dated 14 February 2022.

BD/21-22/187 Fitness to Practice Committee Membership

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Secretary to the College dated 16

Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Board meetings

February 2022.

BD/21-22/188 Associated Companies – Directors’ Reports

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Secretary to the College dated 16 February 2022.

BD/21-22/189 Annual Officer

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Provost dated 23 February 2022.

In response to a query from a Board member, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that it envisaged that there will be an opportunity to thank Professor Seery for his work during two consecutive terms as Senior Tutor and, in particular, for the kindness and understanding he has shown to Trinity’s students. She also noted that it is proposed to review the role of the Senior Tutor and associated workload.

Following comments from a Board member, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer clarified that Postgraduate Advisors are available to support postgraduate students.

BD/21-22/190 Membership of the Student Conduct and Capacity Committee

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Registrar dated 16 February 2022.

BD/21-22/191 Reply to the Higher Education Authority (HEA)

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Secretary to the College dated 16 February 2022.

BD/21-22/192 Membership of the Student Life Committee

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Registrar dated 17 February 2022.

BD/21-22/193 Pro-Chancellor of the University (see BD/21-22/125 of 1 December 2021)

The Board noted that the following has been elected as Pro-Chancellor of the University of Dublin:

- (i) Frank Clarke, B.A., B.L

BD/21-22/194 Appointment of Chairperson of Technological University

The Board noted the memorandum from the Secretary to the College dated 21 February 2022.

In response to queries from a Board member, the Secretary to the College advised that this appointment was a transitional arrangement made by the Minister of Higher and Further Education, Research, Innovation and Science and that in two years the Governing Authority of the Technological University will appoint a Chair.

In response to a further query from the Board member in respect of a potential Conflict of Interest, the Secretary to the College advised that the Trinity Code of Governance 2021 had been forwarded to the individual for consideration and that it was deemed that there is no conflict of interest on this occasion. However, it was deemed appropriate for Board to note the appointment.

SECTION D

In compliance with the Data Protection Acts this information is restricted.

Signed:

Date: